



Our environmental impact



Introduction

We are committed to ensuring our work has the lowest possible environmental impact whilst still providing high-quality activities and experiences for the people of Lancashire and beyond.

We are proud of our environmental impact to date, but acutely aware that we can always do more. We don't have our own theatre or venue. We Use existing multi-use spaces such as village halls, libraries and markets. We maximise the potential of these existing assets without adding to their existing environmental impact.

By programming professional arts activities in rural venues, libraries, small urban spaces, and local events, we bring artists (typically a small number of people) directly to the audience (hopefully a large number of people). Spot On Lancashire has been doing this for nearly thirty years.

1. Planting trees

Culturapedia has planted a tree in Lancashire for each permanent team member through the [Lancashire Woodland Connect](#), which the Ribble Trust manages. In addition, we have committed to planting a tree for every event or production we promote starting January 2021. We do this through [Tree-Nation](#). Details of the growing Culturapedia forest can be seen [here](#).

We remain sceptical of the value of 'offsetting' – just like the practice of [sin-eating](#) was a bit dubious in the past, but planting more trees does remain valuable for the planet.

2. Waste and recycling

2.1. Paper

Paper still plays a part in the work of Culturapedia and will continue to do so for some time yet. We generate some paper usage; other paper arrives in the post in the form of posters and flyers from artists for overprinting.

Printer

We have a shared printer at Culturapedia, which monitors the number of pages printed. Its use does fluctuate throughout the year. The heaviest usage is when we prepare a Spot On mailing or ahead of an event like the Burnley Words Festival. Where possible, we ensure that we buy recycled paper and sheet labels; if these are not available, then from sustainable sources. Where possible, we use the printer's 'print-both-sides' function.

Notes

Unless it contains sensitive information, no piece of paper with a blank side is thrown away. It is used for notes, memos, etc., within the office.

Marketing

Paper, brochures, posters, and flyers remain integral to our marketing strategies. Over the pandemic, we developed a newspaper instead of a seasonal brochure for Spot On. We evolved a hybrid of the two as we moved back to promoting live performances. The newsprint that we use is 100% recyclable once finished. Through our partnership with Lancashire County Council, copies are posted in paper envelopes rather than plastic bags. We endeavour to minimise waste by carefully calculating the print run size based on our current database and available distribution points. We encourage our audiences to subscribe to our email mailings where possible and practicable, and work to keep our audience databases clean and current.

Posters and flyers

We usually request that companies and suppliers provide us with a specific number of paper posters and flyers for third-party performances. We then print suitably sized labels in place of overprinting. For Spot On, the number of posters and flyers is negotiated with the promoter based on local knowledge of the local community. In our contract agreement with performers, we encourage them to provide posters and flyers on recycled stock where possible. For events organised by Culturapedia directly, posters and leaflets are ordered directly, usually from Solopress. Where we control print, recycled paper stock is specified wherever possible.

Post and packaging

Where possible, we reuse envelopes and packaging. A second-hand envelope with a label works just as well as a new one. We use recycled paper-based parcel tape. When envelopes are purchased, we ensure that they are recycled.

We are working to reduce unsolicited mail, such as stationery catalogues, that tend to get recycled before they are read by contacting suppliers. We don't eat Domino's Pizza, but are struggling to avoid their unsolicited paper marketing!

Waste paper

There is a bin in the office, specifically for used clean waste paper and cardboard for recycling. We are careful and try to keep the amount of paper to be recycled to a minimum. Sensitive material is shredded and disposed of in the same way.

2.2. Plastic

Packaging

Polybag packaging is, wherever possible, reused for posting marketing materials. The staff team collect and contribute used packaging from home too to ensure we have enough for our needs.

Consumables

We endeavour to minimise plastic waste in the kitchen. We ensure that teabags do not have a plastic liner. Plastic milk bottles are fully recyclable. We continue to seek ground coffee with a recyclable pouch that can be recycled locally. Disposable lunchtime plastic packaging is discouraged and, where possible, rinsed and placed in the domestic recycling system. Inevitably, other plastic waste is created, pens run out, and things break. Where possible, these are dismantled, and component plastic parts are placed in the recycling. We are based in a co-working building, and despite the efforts of the landlord, the communal recycling efforts are thwarted by other tenants! We have adopted multiple office bins and recycle directly.

Our printer is a [WorkForce Pro WF-C869R Network Multifunction Color Printer](#). It is an inkjet printer with pouches that, according to Epson, print up to 84,000 pages. The Ink is classed as low VOC. Empty pouches are not recyclable but are disposed of infrequently. The pouches contain a chip which is recycled through Blackburn with Darwen's small electrical item recycling system. This system minimises additional packaging and transport costs.

2.3. Composting

We moved to a co-working space in January 2024. Whilst we used to be able to compost coffee grounds and tea bags (we avoid those with plastic liners), now it must go into

general waste. Our landlord is working on waste usage and mitigation as part of a building development phase.

2.4. Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment recycling

In the past, several redundant laptops, tablets, PCs and associated peripherals have been sent to a local project to be refurbished for use by people who would otherwise not have access. In 2019, when moving to a VOIP phone system, we donated our old phone system to another Blackburn-based arts project. Other electricals have been recycled via the supplier (e.g. BT equipment when we changed provider). Spare cables and other small electrical equipment are recycled locally through Blackburn with Darwen's WEEE scheme. We have a stock of rechargeable batteries. Any non-rechargeable batteries are recycled locally. Our landlord in our new office space, The Making Rooms, has a laptop recycling project and is keen to find ways to avoid tech waste.

2.5. Cleaning

Culturapedia's office space is not a high-traffic area or open to the public. It is not a messy working environment. We do not employ a cleaner for the office, which is the team's joint responsibility.

3. Power, heat, and light

Culturapedia's power, heat and light are provided as part of our rent at The Making Rooms. The Making Rooms has an ambition to make this as sustainable as possible.

We only replace electrical equipment when necessary, and the products' energy rating, expected life and environmental credentials are considered before purchase.

There is increasing concern about the amount of energy being consumed in data centres and AI processing. We continue to use cloud storage, but we have planned an annual day when the entire team deletes surplus files, photos, videos, and other unnecessary content. The aim is to reduce our cloud storage by 25%.

4. Water

Culturapedia's water usage is not metered. The toilets in the Making Rooms are fitted with a dual flush. We use water for tea, coffee, general hydration, handwashing and cleaning, but Culturapedia is not a heavy water user.

5. Travel and transport

5.1. Staff Commuting

Two of the permanent team live a short walk to the office and therefore commute on foot. Two full-time team members commute by a petrol car, approximately 20 miles return, but work from home about fifty per cent of the time. Another team member commutes by train/bus and on foot about one day per week from Manchester (50 miles return).

5.2. Conducting business

The amount of business travel needed is erratic. We work across Lancashire, including rural and peri-urban spaces. Public transportation in the county could be improved, necessitating the use of cars. We also need to attend events that we programme, sometimes taking resources, again needing cars.

5.3. Third-party mileage

Our vision is to be the flagship provider of excellent art at home, online and in a community space curated by local people. We passionately believe in the rights of places outside big cities in the north to have a fair share of cultural investment and services. We fill the map gaps by working outside a physical arts venue. Our USP is that we have no physical building. A cultural life should be on everyone's doorstep, so instead of people asking, 'Why is this happening here?' they ask, 'What's next?' Given the above, our artists visit our audiences in small numbers, rather than in large groups on the road. Our focus for Spot On and the other work that we do is on small-scale touring. We do not work with tour companies that have large sets, big casts, and support staff. The average number of people involved in delivering individual projects for Culturapedia in 2023/24 is 3.2. Our artists mainly travelled to Lancashire in a van or a car. We maintain that our methodology

of transporting small numbers of artists directly to their audiences has had a positive impact on the environment for many years.

6. Homeworking

Following the pandemic, we have become used to homeworking. Our directors live a short walk from the office but work from home about 50% of the time. We anticipate that other staff will continue to work from home for about 25% of their hours. Whereas Culturapedia cannot insist that the team consider the environmental impact of their home-based work, we encourage and support the team to be carbon-conscious at all times.

7. Third-party actions

As a horizontally integrated organisation, we have a wide range of partners. These include regular contracted-out services such as our accountants and HR specialists. We have long-term partnerships with our designers, web hosts, and other bought-in services. We have asked each partner to share their environmental policy with us or have found it online. Our regular partners and suppliers are listed below.

Contracted out services	
Evans Accountants	https://www.evansaccountants.com/environmentalpolicy
Metis HR	Planning to develop policy following a move out of shared premises.
Source Creative	
Carbon Copy	
Bought in services	
Google Workspace/ YouTube	https://sustainability.google/
Canva	https://product.canva.com/2020-sustainability-goals/

Mailchimp	https://mailchimp.com/givewhereyoulive/
Facebook/Instagram	https://sustainability.fb.com/
Bluesky	Bluesky Social, the company, is a Public Benefit Corporation. It is owned by Jay Graber and the Bluesky team. https://bsky.social/about/blog/7-05-2023-business-plan
VoiP\Studio	
Xero	https://www.xero.com/id/about/social-and-environmental-impact/environmental-sustainability/
Other Key partners for 2025/26	
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/our-vision-missions-and-strategies/our-vision/deliver-our-climate-emergency#:~:text=Increase%20recycling%20rates%20from%2030,staff%20business%20travel%20and%20commuting.
Lancashire County Council	https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/197545/Environment-Policy.pdf
Blackburn BID	Blackburn BID is managed by Newground CIC https://www.newground.co.uk/about-us/
Burnley Leisure and Culture Trust	https://blcgroup.co.uk/plastic-free/

We work with various artistic partners/suppliers and venues each year. Our engagement letters include a clause stating our position and encouraging our suppliers to consider the environmental impact of their work. We ask them to provide printed materials on recycled stock and use transport efficiently where possible. Approximately 50% of our partner venues are libraries or other local authority buildings and should be covered by the above policies. For additional community or commercial venues, we encourage any steps that venues can take to reduce their carbon footprint.

8. Benchmark monitoring

Pages printed

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Q1	N/A	0	327	2799	2801
Q2	1645	0	1170	2664	3314
Q3	1409	1125	5079	2135	2341
Q4	1814	237	10508	5999	
Total	4868	1362	17084	13597	8456

*new printer acquired July 2019

Mileage claimed

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Q1	1656	146	147	117	1257
Q2	1678	0	1851	1558	2292
Q3	1647	471	1637	1023	1070
Q4	691	0	1109	1085	
Total	5671	617	4743	3783	4619